

LISTING OF CLAIMS

Claims 22, 24-27, 29-31, and 33-37 are pending in this application. Claims 22, 25, 27, 30, 31, and 34 are amended. Claims 35, 36, and 37 are newly added. The remaining claims are unchanged.

1-21. (Cancelled)

22. (Currently Amended) A gaming machine for simultaneously displaying player tracking information and a game image to a player on the same display when the gaming machine is in communication with a host computer over a network, and the host computer maintains a player tracking account with player tracking information associated with a player, the gaming machine comprising:

- a player tracking input device coupled to receive player identification information;
- a communications interface configured to provide the received player identification information to the host computer;

- a display;

- game electronics configured to provide a game image, **the game image including display fields, the display fields** including **a game display field including** game output information;

- a video overlay device **apart from the game electronics, the video overlay device** coupled between the game electronics and the display to receive the game image and configured to:

- receive, responsive to the host computer identifying the player based on the player identification information, the player tracking information from the player account **at the host computer via the communications interface**,

- generate a player tracking information image including the player tracking information, ~~wherein the player tracking information image includes one or more items selected from the group consisting of a player name, player ID, point data, progressive data, extra credit data, bonus data, loyalty data, and award data,~~

- determine one or more regions of the game image that are **unimportant to game play, not occupied by a display field, including the game display field**, wherein the one or more regions are portions of the game image that if overlaid would not ~~interfere with game play,~~ **overlay a display field**,

overlay the player tracking information image on the **determined** one or more regions of the game image, thereby creating a combined image, and wherein the player tracking information image appears to be embedded within the game image,

provide the combined image to the display, and

provide, when the player is not identified, only the game image to the display.

23. (Cancelled)

24. (Previously Presented) The gaming machine of claim 22, wherein the player tracking information image includes an animated graphic.

25. (Currently Amended) The gaming machine of claim 22, wherein the game image shows a plurality of reels **in the game display field**.

26. (Previously Presented) The gaming machine of claim 22, wherein the player tracking input device includes a card reader.

27. (Currently Amended) A gaming machine for simultaneously displaying player tracking information and a game image to a player on the same display when the gaming machine is in communication with a host computer over a network, and the host computer maintains a player tracking account with player tracking information associated with a player, the gaming machine comprising:

a card reader coupled to receive player identification information from a player tracking card;

a communications interface configured to provide the received player identification information to the host computer;

a game video display;

game electronics programmed to provide a game image **having a plurality of display fields**, including **a game display field containing** game output information;

a video overlay device **apart from the game electronics, the video overlay device** coupled between the game electronics and the game video display to receive the game image and configured to:

receive, responsive to the host computer identifying the player based on the player identification information, the player tracking information from the player account **at the host computer** via the communications interface,

generate a player tracking information image including the player tracking information, ~~wherein the player tracking information image includes one or more items selected from the group consisting of a player name, player ID, point data, progressive data, extra credit data, bonus data, loyalty data, and award data,~~

determine one or more regions of the game image that are ~~unimportant to game play,~~ not occupied by a display field, including the game display field, wherein the one or more regions are portions of the game image that if overlaid would not ~~interfere with game play,~~ overlay a display field,

overlay the player tracking information image on the determined one or more regions of the game image, thereby creating a combined image, and wherein the player tracking information image appears to be embedded within the game image,

provide the combined image to the game video display, and

provide, when the player is not identified, only the game image to the game video display.

28. (Cancelled)

29. (Previously Presented) The gaming machine of claim 27, wherein the player tracking information image includes an animated graphic.

30. (Currently Amended) The gaming machine of claim 27, wherein the game image shows a plurality of reels in the game display field.

31. (Currently Amended) A method for simultaneously displaying player tracking information and a game image to a player on the same display of a gaming machine in communication with a host computer over a network, the host computer maintaining a player tracking account with player tracking information associated with a player, the method comprising:

providing, in game electronics coupled to a video overlay device, a game image having display fields including a game display field containing game output information;

receiving, in the video overlay device coupled between the game electronics and the display, the game image, the video overlay device being apart from the game electronics;

receiving player identification information;

determining whether the host computer identifies the player based on the player identification information;

when the host computer identifies the player:

receiving the player tracking information from the player account **at the host computer via the communications interface,**

generating a player tracking information image including the player tracking information at the video overlay device, ~~wherein the player tracking information image includes one or more items selected from the group consisting of a player name, player ID, point data, progressive data, extra credit data, bonus data, loyalty data, and award data,~~

determining at the video overlay device one or more regions of the game image that are ~~unimportant to game play,~~ **not occupied by a display field, including the game display field,** wherein the one or more regions are portions of the game image that if overlaid would not ~~interfere with game play,~~ **overlay a display field,**

combining, in the video overlay device, the player tracking information image with the game image to define a combined image by overlaying the player tracking information image on the one or more regions of the **determined one or more regions of the** game image ~~designated as unimportant to game play,~~ and wherein the player tracking information image appears to be embedded within the game image, and

providing the combined image to the display; and

when the host computer does not identify the player:

providing, from the video overlay device, only the game image to the display.

32. (Cancelled)

33. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 31, wherein the player tracking information image includes an animated graphic.

34. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 31, wherein the game image shows a plurality of reels **in the game display field.**

35. (New) The gaming machine of claim 22, wherein the player tracking information image includes one or more items selected from the group consisting of a player name, player ID, point data, progressive data, extra credit data, bonus data, loyalty data, and award data.

36. (New) The gaming machine of claim 27, wherein the player tracking information image includes one or more items selected from the group consisting of a player name, player ID, point data, progressive data, extra credit data, bonus data, loyalty data, and award data.

37. (New) The gaming machine of claim 31, wherein the player tracking information image includes one or more items selected from the group consisting of a player name, player ID, point data, progressive data, extra credit data, bonus data, loyalty data, and award data.